

1                   **HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 140**

2     (By Delegates R. Phillips, Caputo, Hartman, Tomblin, Eldridge,  
3       Lynch, Craig, Iaquina, Stowers, White, Mr. Speaker, Mr.  
4       Thompson, Andes, Armstead, Barill, Barrett, Boggs, Campbell,  
5       Canterbury, Diserio, Ferns, Ferro, Fleischauer, Gearheart,  
6       Hamilton, Jones, Lawrence, Longstreth, Marcum, Marshall, Morgan,  
7       Moye, E. Nelson, O'Neal, Paxton, Perry, Pethtel, L. Phillips, D.  
8       Poling, M. Poling, Reynolds, Shott, Skaff, Skinner, P. Smith,  
9       Sobonya, Sponaugle, Staggers, Stephens, Storch, Swartzmiller,  
10                 Walker, Westfall, Williams and Young)  
11

12  
13 Recognizing July 16 as "Atomic Veterans Day of Remembrance" in West  
14       Virginia.

15       WHEREAS, On July 16, 1945, the world's first atomic bomb,  
16 code-named "Trinity," was detonated in Alamogordo, New Mexico, and  
17 from that date until June 12, 1963, there were 1,054 nuclear  
18 devices detonated in tests considered vital to our national  
19 security, and approximately 750,000 U.S. military and civilian  
20 personnel participated in these experimental endeavors; and

21       WHEREAS, Many of the nation's veterans, including residents of  
22 West Virginia, were subjected to varying amounts of radiation  
23 because of this testing of atomic weapons; and

24       WHEREAS, The potential harm to these veterans was unknown at  
25 the time of the testing, resulting in the exposure of many veterans  
26 to harmful doses of radiation and causing them to suffer  
27 debilitating, degenerative diseases that affect the veterans and  
28 their descendants; and

1       WHEREAS, Veterans who were early test subjects were required to  
2 sign an oath of secrecy regarding their involvement in the atomic  
3 testing, preventing these veterans from informing the Veterans  
4 Health Administration of their medical problems that resulted from  
5 radiation until 1996, when these veterans were released from their  
6 oaths of secrecy; and

7       WHEREAS, In 1979, the National Association of Atomic Veterans  
8 was created to locate these veterans, to honor the sacrifices they  
9 made and to help these veterans and their families in obtaining  
10 medical treatment and assistance; and

11       WHEREAS, By engaging in a national research and education  
12 effort for atomic war veterans, the National Association of Atomic  
13 Veterans is promoting early detection of medical problems and  
14 research and documentation of the connection between radiation  
15 exposure and resultant cancer and other debilitating, degenerative  
16 diseases and genetic mutations; and

17       WHEREAS, In the time since these detonations, roughly fifty  
18 percent of the men and women who participated in the testing have  
19 experienced the harmful effects of exposure to ionizing radiation,  
20 yet these veterans who were injured in the line of duty received no  
21 medals because they were not in combat; and

22       WHEREAS, The number of members in this group is rapidly  
23 decreasing because of the age of these veterans, and thus it is  
24 important to recognize these individuals who sacrificed so much in

1 serving our country and who are deserving of our immense gratitude;  
2 therefore, be it

3       *Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

4       That the Legislature hereby recognizes July 16 as "Atomic  
5 Veterans Day of Remembrance" in West Virginia and encourages the  
6 Governor, the Department of Veterans Assistance and all West  
7 Virginians to take part in this significant observance; and, be it

8       *Further Resolved,* That the Clerk of the House of Delegates  
9 forward a certified copy of this resolution to Haskell Watts Jr.,  
10 West Virginia State Commander of the National Association of Atomic  
11 Veterans, the Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Veterans  
12 Assistance and the Governor of West Virginia.